(b) Pakistan's acquisition of sophisticated weaponary from USA results regrettably in the diversion of our resources from development to defence. Government continues to maintain a constant vigil over all developments having a bearing on the country's security.

Military relationship between Pakistan and Sri Lanka

336. SHRI CHITTA BASU : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the increasing military relationship between Pakistan and Sri Lanka; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Government are keeping a constant watch on the situation and all appropriate steps to safeguard India's interests would be taken as and when required.

Irrigation projects in Madhya Pradesh

337. SHRI CHITTA BASU : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are about 490 irrigation projects in Madhya Pradesh, which violate the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government in that regard.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) Violations of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 have come to notice of the Central Government in 10 irrigation projects in Madhya Pradesh.

(b) The Central Government have communicated to all the State and Union Territory Governments that diversion of forest land will not be approved in regard to projects in which the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 have been violated. Diversion of forest lands in regard to 8 irrigation projects in Madhya Pradesh involving violation of the Forest (conservation) Act, 1980 has not been approved.

Escape of Charles Sobhraj from Tihar Jail

338. SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM:

SHRI J. P. GOYAL:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the circumstances under which Charles Sobhraj and six other criminals escaped from Tihar Jail on March 16, 1986;

(b) what action has been taken against the jail authorities responsible for their escape:

(c) what precautionary measures have been taken to prevent such escape in future;:

(d) whether any foreign hand and foreign nationals are involved in planning the escape of Charles Sobhraj and others; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof and the foreign nationals involved in helping Charles Sobhraj and what action Government have taken to prevent foreign nationals visiting jails?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) On the afternoon of 16-3-86 Charles Sobhraj escaped with 6 other jail detenues of whom five were

under trials and two were convicts. A massive hunt was launched to apprehend these escapees. An enquiry was ordered by Lt. Governor, Delhi into the matter.

(b) Eight jail officials were arrested and suspended from service on grounds of conspiracy which resulted in facilitating the escape of Charles Sobhraj.

(c) Government have taken, *inter alia* the following steps to esnsure greater safety in the Tihar Jail.

(i) A full time I. G. (Prisons), a senior Police Officer has been appointed who will have his office on the Tihar Jail premises for more effective supervision.

(ii) Additional staff of 238 has been sanctioned with a view to providing more constant vigilance at all lev ls

(iii) 6 additional vehicles have been sanctioned with a view to providing greater mobility among the supervisory staff to enable them to attend to emergent situations , as also to provide for the more secure transit of prisoners to courts and hospitals.

(iv) The existing security forces deployed in and around the Tihar Jail have been significantly augmented.

(v) The flow of visitors and vehicles into the complex is regulated through restricted points. No vehicle is permitted beyond certain limits.

(vi) Extra guard is deployed to keep a vigil over visitors as well as jail inmates before and after inteviews.

(d) and (e) The matter is under investigation.

Prospects of peaceful solution of Sri Lanka Problem

339. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL :

SHRI .K. VASUDEVA PANICKER :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) what are the present prospecets of a peaceful political solution of the ethnic problem of Tamilans of Indian origin in Sri Lanka ;

(b) whether Government have any specific and concrete proposals for solution of the problem: and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN): (a) to (c) The main proplem facing the Tamils of Indian origin in Sri Lanka, as distinct from Sri Lanka Tamils has been the probelm of statelessness. This was sought to be tackled through the 1964 and 1974 Agreements under which 600,000 were to be granted Indian citizenship and repatriated to India and 375,000 were to be granted Sri Lanka citizenship. The Agreements were in effect for 17 years *i. e.* upto 30-10-1981. The residual problem of statelessness that had arisen on account of short-fall in application for Indian Citizenship has been dealt with through an understanding arrived at between the Governments of India and Sri Lanka on Janurary 15, 1986. According to this understanding Sri Lanka Government will grant citizenship to the residual number of Stateless persons (estimated at 94,000 accountable persons and their natural increase), thus bringing to an end the problem of Statelessness of the Tamils of Indian origin in Sri Lanka